

What Providers Need to Know: Phase 1B of COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Who May Be Vaccinated During Phase 1B?

This group is made up of more than 2.2 million Ohioans, including:

- Ohioans, age 65 years and older (approximately 1.8 million people).
- Ohioans age 18 and older (Moderna) or age 16 and older (Pfizer-BioNTech) with severe congenital, developmental, or early onset medical disorders that make them particularly vulnerable.
 - This includes cerebral palsy; spina bifida; congenital heart disease; type 1 diabetes; inherited metabolic disorders; severe neurological disorders, including epilepsy; severe genetic disorders, including Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, and Turner syndrome; severe lung disease, including cystic fibrosis and severe asthma; sickle cell anemia; and alpha and beta thalassemia.
- Teachers and school employees in *K-12 schools that want to go back, or to remain, educating in-person (approximately 334,000 individuals). This includes teachers, support staff, administrators, food service staff, bus drivers, paid coaches, janitorial staff, and other adults who work in school buildings.

**In order for K-12 school staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, the schools in which they work must be providing an in-person or hybrid learning model by March 1, 2021, and should submit the [K-12 Notice of Intent form](#) no later than Jan. 18, 2021.*

When Can We Start Vaccinating Phase 1B?

Ohio has established a unified approach to starting Phase 1B, meaning that all vaccine providers should follow [the tentative eligibility timeline](#) below. When a new age range opens, that doesn't mean that vaccinations should be complete for the previous age range. It will take a number of weeks to administer vaccine to all Phase 1B populations given the limited doses available.

The following start dates are subject to change:

- Jan. 19, 2021 – Ohioans 80 years of age and older.
- Jan. 25, 2021 – Ohioans 75 years of age and older; those with severe congenital, developmental, or early-onset medical disorders as outlined above.
- Feb. 1, 2021 – Ohioans 70 years of age and older; employees of K-12 schools that wish to remain or return to in-person or hybrid models.
- Feb. 8, 2021 – Ohioans 65 years of age and older.

Vaccine providers should continue to vaccinate Phase 1A populations with first and second doses as Phase 1B begins.

Providers must continue to track and coordinate the administration of the second vaccine dose for all individuals who received a first dose. [Read an overview of Ohio's phased approach to vaccine distribution.](#)

Strategies to Consider When Vaccinating the 1B Population

Some Ohioans are at increased risk for exposure to COVID-19 or developing serious complications from COVID-19, including severe illness and death. These vulnerable populations may have preexisting underlying medical conditions or may live or work in settings that elevate their risk. Vaccine providers should consider focused strategies to make vaccine options available to members of these vulnerable populations.

- Eliminate barriers to healthcare access for vulnerable populations. These barriers can include lack of adequate transportation, handicap inaccessible locations, lack of computer literacy or access, and employment that does not offer paid time off for medical appointments. When planning appointments or clinics, vaccine providers should consider strategies to negate potential barriers to access and help ensure vaccine availability for members of vulnerable populations. Examples include offering flexibility in scheduling appointments; advertising clinic information on print materials to display at libraries, grocery stores or faith-based organizations; partnering with churches, libraries or community centers for clinics; partnering with ethnic media and trusted leaders to share information; offering after-hours or weekend services, mobile vaccination services or clinics that offer walk-in options.
- Ensure that identification requirements are used to verify name and date of birth, not residence or immigration status.

Read ODH's complete guidance on [Health Equity Considerations for COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution](#) for more strategies to eliminate barriers and help ensure equitable access.

Who Will be Offering Vaccinations?

At the beginning of Phase 1B, local health departments, hospitals, pharmacies, federally qualified health centers, and rural health centers will administer the vaccines. Primary care and home health providers will be added as more vaccine becomes available. Groups defined by age will receive the vaccine from local health departments, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers, as well as some retail pharmacies. Providers for other audiences are yet to be announced. County developmental disabilities boards and Medicaid managed care plans will help coordinate vaccination efforts for individuals with severe congenital, development or early onset medical disorders.

How Will Vaccine Allocations be Determined?

At this time, vaccine supply is scarce. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) will determine allocations weekly. Planned allocations are determined based upon factors including each county's share of Phase 1B populations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [social vulnerability index](#). All counties will receive at least 100 doses. Equitable access and throughput will also be determining factors.

Expectations for Vaccine Providers

In order to ensure rapid administration of the vaccine to eligible Ohioans, providers must meet the following expectations:

- Vaccine administration must begin within 24 hours of receipt of a shipment, and all doses should be given within seven days. If you are unable to fulfill this commitment, contact the Ohio Department of Health immediately at 1-844-963-4829 so allocations can be adjusted.
- By participating in Ohio's Phase 1B, you must agree to provide vaccine to any eligible patients, and you are not permitted to limit your distribution to existing patients and/or customers.
- Providers need to clearly and publicly state how they will administer the vaccine, and make the information easily accessible to all eligible vaccine recipients. Providers should use all possible communication methods, including website and social media, and ensure information is frequently updated. Specifically, please inform eligible recipients:
 - Will appointments be available/required?
 - Location and contact information.
 - Is it a first-come, first-served clinic?
 - Any documentation required at appointment.
 - Hours, including extended hours (evenings and weekends).
- Protecting our healthcare workers is important, and vaccinating the vaccinators is appropriate. Please limit use of allocated vaccine to no more than 5% to vaccinate your staff who are administering vaccine (e.g., five out of 100 doses may be used for vaccinators).
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says vaccinators can pull every full dose obtainable from a vial, but excess vaccine from multiple vials should never be combined to create one dose.
 - Pfizer-BioNTech: Vaccinators may withdraw more than five doses from a single five-dose vial (perhaps six or seven doses). Ancillary kits for Pfizer vaccine will provide enough supplies to allow for six doses from each vial.
 - Moderna: Vaccinators may withdraw more than 10 doses from a single 10-dose vial (perhaps 11 doses). Some providers also report, depending on the syringes used, that they are only able to draw up nine doses.
 - Vaccine to discard: These vaccines do not contain preservative. If the amount of vaccine remaining in the vial cannot provide a full dose, the vial and its contents should be discarded.
- No vaccine should ever be wasted. If vaccine remains unused, such as at the end of a vaccination clinic, the primary goal should be to provide that vaccine quickly to eligible vaccine recipients. When that is not possible, please administer vaccine to any available individuals who meet the FDA's requirements for that product to avoid wasting any doses. Providers should have a plan ready for what to do if extra doses remain after a clinic that need administered urgently.

How to be Part of New Vaccine Provider Locations Directory

A new Vaccine Provider Locations searchable directory will be available at vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov beginning Jan. 14, 2021, allowing Ohioans to search by county and ZIP code to find a provider in their area. Providers should share accurate contact information, including phone numbers, administration addresses, and websites specific to COVID-19 vaccines to assist the public in getting vaccinated and scheduling appointments. The directory will show all enrolled COVID-19 vaccination providers currently administering vaccines to Phase 1B populations throughout Ohio. This information can be submitted by [completing this brief form available here](#). Providers must [log in to OHID](#) to access the Vaccine Provider Locations form.

The [Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Provider website](#) is a hub for a variety of resources for vaccine providers. Vaccine providers with questions may call the ODH Provider Call Center at 1-844-90DHVAX (1-844-963-4829) or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

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For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov